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entered by a dingy gate and wicket; within that wall, completely secluded from observation, and (except that the hum of the city occasionally reaches it,) as perfectly silent and retired as if in a wilderness, stands the subject of our sketch, Rathmines Castle. It presents a very antiquated appearance: round Norman towers, connected by curtain walls, embattled parapets, mullioned windows, with label and hood mouldings, oriels, and machicolations, all speak of other days; but it is only an imitation, although a happy one. It was erected, or the original house enlarged and altered to its present appearance, not many years since, by Colonel Wynne; has subsequently been the seat of Sir Jonas Green, the late City Recorder, and is now the villa of the Rev. Thomas Kelly, of Kellyville, Queen's County. The walls are covered with creepers and trained plants, both foreign and domestic; the polished ivy spreads luxuriantly over a great part of it; and the monthly rose, in bleak December, intrudes its blushing head into the attic windows.

The ancient Castle of Rathmines, lying a little more to the south, is an irregular, uninteresting building, so far modernized as to have the appearance of an old white-washed farm-house. It is now occupied as a boarding house for invalids, and, unfortunately, is seldom empty.

There are few spots in Ireland that have not, at some period of our history, been the theatres of contention and bloodshed; even Rathmines, placid, quiet, and retired as it now appears, has had its share—both the church and the castle are erected on what are, to this day, called the “bloody fields,” for here occurred that slaughter of the early English colonists of Dublin by the Irish of Wicklow, which gave name to Black Monday; and on these plains, in the year 1649, the stern republican, Colonel Jones, attacked and defeated an army of nineteen thousand men, who lay encamped here under the Marquis of Ormond, killing four thousand, and taking three thousand prisoners.

R. A.

PROCESS FOR SWEETENING WATER AND OTHER LIQUIDS.

This process consists simply in forcing a stream or streams of air through foul or tainted water, intended to be rendered sweet, and is particularly applicable to sweetening water on board ships, which has become tainted in water casks. The means employed are either pumps or bellows—the air must be forced so as to pass to the bottom of the cask, and the effect will be, that the offensive gas, held in solution in the water, and which on board ship is generally *hydrogen*, will be expelled from the water, after which the water must be left at rest for the impurities to subside.

THE FAIRY WOMAN OF BALRATH.

A TALE FOUNDED ON FACT

The midnight spell—the moonlight charm—
These were her weapons, good and ill.

It is truly lamentable to behold what a firm footing old superstitions and absurd customs have obtained in the minds of our Irish peasantry. There is not an ill which happens to them but is ascribed to some evil influence in which invisible or mystical agents are concerned. Not an accident occurs either to their persons or properties but has for its director some spiteful fairy or malignant witch, and instead of applying the proper remedies to an injury or a disease, they have recourse to counter charms and incantations to circumvent the spells of their magical or invisible enemy. In such cases, the general result, as may be expected, will be loss and misery, and as the worst passions of human nature are enlisted in support of their wicked and superstitious practices, more desperate consequences often follow. Every district has its witch, fairy-man, fortune-teller, or prophet, and in parts every village is supplied with its own *wise man*, or *knowing woman*, and in these ignorant, though cunning wretches, the most implicit faith is placed by the misguided and deluded people.

I remember one old beldame who was the terror of my boyhood, and who possessed the most horrible character that ever fell to the lot of human being to be burdened

with. It was said that when she was young she caused the death of a false lover by some horrible process. She was accused of depriving several farmers of their butter, and of causing their cows to run dry. The poor man's pigs could not be troubled with the measles or his children with the mumps, but Madge Moran was the author of the affliction. His heifers could not be seized with the black leg, or his wife with the weed, but “the ugly old witch, bad scran to her,” was always venting her spite and malice on him, and a present of propitiation was usually made to render her more friendly in future. No misfortune, either natural or accidental, that befel the young or the old; but was laid at her door; still she was respected from her dread—her wants supplied, and her comforts attended to from very fear—she was hated, feared, shunned, obeyed, dreaded, sought after, and consulted—all but despised or loved—the prophetess, physician, and magician of Balrath. She was old and small in stature, but invariably appeared dressed in a clean white cap, and short red cloak. Her hair was white, carefully and smoothly turned back on all sides, forming what was called a *Tate*, leaving the wrinkled forehead completely bare, and exhibiting with singular effect her thin shrivelled countenance. There was a spiteful expression about the puckered mouth and peaked chin, and a designing glance from the bleared eye, well calculated to impress the ignorant with a repulsed feeling.

Our village of Balrath was a sweet quiet spot. The road sweeping round the base of a wooded hill, and plunging into the gorge of a tangled glen, was lost in the deep shade of the trees, among which you could distinguish the sound of a stream as it struggled to force its way to the still smooth lake below. On a barren moory spot beside the lake, at the skirts of the village, resided Madge Moran.

Even in a secluded rural village, you will meet with almost all the characters, and in all their variety of shade and mingling, to be found in the wide and crowded city.—The rake, the profligate, the fool, the knave, the worthless and the abandoned, and perhaps the good and the honest man. Terence Magrath, the only son of a respectable farmer, reserved for himself the character of the rake.—The favourite of indulgent parents, he was allowed at an early age to follow the bent of his own inclinations. Supplied with the little means which they could afford for his amusement or gratification, he was enabled to pursue the path of his passions without interruption or hindrance.—A young man allowed to run the round of folly and extravagance, taking counsel alone for his high coloured fancies and passions, is a melancholy object. A young tree may be permitted to spread its branches high and wide in green and wild luxuriance, but it must undergo the cultivating hand of the pruner to make it bear beautiful blossoms, or yield a profitable return of wholesome fruit.—Terence was a laughing, careless, good-natured, frolicsome young fellow; on Sundays and holydays he was to be seen at the dance in the village, the blythe of the thoughtless throng. He was seldom guilty of a malicious or ill-natured wickedness, but ready to run first into any thoughtless freak, and consulting but his own pleasure and amusement for the moment. He was early led into riot and dissipation, and still though a “devil may care,” he was generally beloved. He was also a special favourite with the fair—the most lively and agreeable companion, the best dancer, and the handsomest young man within miles, and then so off-handed, liberal, and pleasant!

Terence Magrath could not be supposed to exist without being in love. Love is the life, and inmost soul of an Irishman; his day-dream and his bliss, his happiness and perfection. Terence therefore selected for his heart's idol the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, who though not so wealthy in the estimation of his neighbours as the parents of Terence, was yet comfortable and independent. She was very young, innocent and engaging; and it would be paying a bad compliment to the taste of Terence if I could not say that she was handsome. She was lively, and Terence loved her deeply and sincerely; and in return Alice Moore loved him tenderly and truly, and with all the enthusiastic devotedness of woman's young love. At first the parents of Terence did not notice their son's attentions to the fair Alice, thinking it but the casual gallantry usual among young people. As time passed, however, it

seemed but to encrease their affection, and their attachment became the topic of village gossip; they then took Terence severely to account on the subject. "You must," said his keen old father, "look a peg higher than Alice Moore, and have the spirit of the Magrath's in you; what signifies what she could bring you to what I could give you. Do you think that the careful gatherings of my long life will go to make a beggar rich? No, I'd sooner see my only child a lifeless corpse under me." The obstacles thus thrown in his way served but to inflame his ardent mind, so unused to meet with contradiction. Private meetings in secret places were agreed upon, and the lovers enjoyed one another's society unknown to the world. The privacy of their stolen interviews carried a fascination into their very souls. The knowledge of being obliged to enjoy in secret their deep-rooted love, brought added and heightened delight, but it was doomed to end in misery. One error—one unguarded moment of passion and crime overwhelmed both with calamity and unquenchable destruction.

The tale of shame was soon noised about with busy tongue. Poor Alice Moore could not show her face out of doors. The hearts of her miserable parents were filled with anguish and affliction, and every one pitied them for having so unfortunate a daughter. Terence still promised to marry her, and when after dusk he could contrive to steal to the little window of her chamber, he would use all his endeavours to solace and comfort her. His parents became more anxious than ever, and proposed that he should marry a young woman who lived some miles off, and who was said to possess what to them would be a large fortune. It was even reported that the marriage was about to take place immediately, though Terence remained firm in his refusal. When poor Alice heard this, she grew distracted, and what served to confirm her worst suspicions was, that for two evenings past he had not paid his accustomed visit. At last she determined to prove the skill of Madgy, the fairy woman, and one evening after the dark fell, she proceeded by a circuitous route, and alone, to the lonely cabin of the witch. The door was closed, but a faint stream of light came from the window. Alice entered—the hag was seated before the embers of a small turf fire, and alone. She was smoking, and her face was scarcely visible from the dense cloud that issued from her mouth, and slowly rolled round her head. She saluted poor Alice with a cackling chuckle. "Cha ha! cha ha! I knew you'd come," said she, "I was thinking you'd soon pay me a visit; but sit down, it does not answer you to stand long, sit down *achorra*."

"Oh, Madgy *avourneen machree*!" said the heart broken Alice, what'll become of me? Oh, *ashore mavourneen*, can you do any thing for me at all?—I'll do anything in the world for you. I'll give you any thing you ask that I have if you but help me in my desolation. Oh, Terry, Terry! little I thought you'd do the like after all your oaths and promises."

"Cha ha! cha ha! aye, aye," again cackled forth the old wretch, "every one comes to me when they get into misfortune; and thin its oh, Madgy, what'll I do—ah Madgy won't you do this, and oh, Madgy, won't you do that, as if I could find remedies for every bad thing they think well of doing."

"Madgy, jewel," answered Alice with streaming eyes, "don't talk that way to me, my heart's sore enough already, God knows; and indeed I am hardly to blame.—Oh, if I took my mother's advice I wouldn't now be a daughter of shame to her grey head. But sure I never considered that he could deceive me or give me up for another after the *hand and word** he gave me so faithfully."

"Ah! that same Terry Magrath," said Madgy solemnly, "was always a jackeen since a yard made him a coat. When he was a little boy he killed my ducks and worried my cat, and threw stones at my cocks and hens; when he grew older he'd laugh and grin and sneer at me, and ask me what were the fairies doing last night, and make fine fun for himself and his companions of poor ould Madgy."

* The pledging of a *hand and word*, in love affairs, among the Irish peasantry, is considered as binding as the most solemn oaths and, almost in every instance, as inviolably preserved.

"Oh God may convart and forgive him," replied Alice, "but here's two shillings and six pence, and give me your advice and good will, and tell me what's best for me to do."

The old hag grinned with delight at the sight of the money, and taking her pipe from her mouth she dashed the ashes from it, and laid it carefully by; she then turned the money over in her hand and deposited it in her pocket. "I'll tell you what, Alice Moore," said she brightening, "I'll just prove your friend and settle the villain that desaved any honest man's child."

"May the holy virgin and her blessed son reward you," said the stricken young creature, eagerly catching at the faintest gleam of hope.

"I'll do it—I'll do it for him, for he deserves it this long time, and I'm long watchin to ketch him," said the old one.

"Oh, its the blessin of the distressed and heart broken, may attend you," fervently ejaculated Alice.

"Well now listen, and don't tell the mother that bore you, or the priest that christened you, what passed betune us this night; swear that for me," said Madgy with earnestness.

"I do—I do," said Alice alarmedly.

"Swear it," said the beldame.

"I swear," said Alice, "I'll never tell it."

"That'll do," she replied apparently satisfied, "now mind what I say well. Bring me to-morrow night a sheaf of clean corn,* bring three winnel sheets and three mould candles, and as we must stay up all night, maybe you'll bring something to keep the sleep off us, and to comfort our hearts through the night."

"I will, I will," said Alice, "is there any thing more that we'll want?"

"Yes," said the hag, "there is one thing more, iv you have the courage to go through with it, which can't be done 'ithout."

"I'll do any thing—there's nothing in the world too hard for me," said Alice.

"Then listen to me *alanna*," said Madgy in a half whisper, "you must bring a spade and go to the churchyard at *twelve o'clock and dig the grave*!"

Alice started with horror—she comprehended the full extent of Madgy's designs, and she shuddered at the sensation awakened by the diabolical plan crept over her body; "oh no, no," she exclaimed, "I don't wish to see his death. I wouldn't for the ransom of a king that anything bad should come on him—oh no, Madgy, I can never injure him."

"Well then what do you want me to do?" said the old one sulkily, "go and see him married to another, and watch them as they drive to 'the dragging home,' and admire the fine clothes of the bride; and say she's handsome, and see the father of your child made another's for life—while every one points to you and sez, there's the woman without modesty."

"Oh, Madgy, you break my heart," said the sobbing Alice, "I couldn't survive that day—but even then I couldn't hurt or harm him; try some other remedy for the mother of glory!"

"Aye, aye, fools will be fools still," said the old wretch, "I wasn't that full of nonsense when I was like you. No, no, revenge was sweet; but no matter, there is only one other trial for you now, and—"

"And what, *avourneen*?" said the poor Alice.

"Twill cost more money," said Madgy, "nearly as much more as what you gave me."

"I don't care for that," said Alice, "so you can do any thing to relieve me."

"I'll do my best," said Madgy, "send me two shillings to-morrow morning, and come to me to-morrow evening,

* There is a superstition among the Irish, that if you seek a person's death, and apply to certain fairy people they can procure it for you. The plan said to be followed is this:—a sheaf of corn is made to undergo certain spells, known only to the initiated; it is then waked with all the formula, sheets, candles, keening, &c. and buried; as the sheaf rots, the marked person decays and dies.

and I'll give you a powder* which you must make him drink, and then never believe me again if he doesn't leave the whole world for your sake."

Alice's blue eyes sparkled with joy at this declaration, she looked her heart's warm gratitude to old Madge, and the delight of her soul shone in her flushed and anxious countenance.

"Are you in airnest" she said, "or do you only flatter my weakness?"

"He'll quit the Queen of England for your sake" said Madge, assuringly.

"May Heaven bless you," replied the relieved and confiding girl.

The powder was procured next evening, and a private message despatched to Terence. He came after dark—Alice in tears upbraided him with his neglect and breach of promise, while he assured, and explained, and vowed eternal truth over again.

A servant girl brought in a warm posset to Alice, which she divided into two portions, taking care, while her lover looked another way, to slip the powder into the one designed for him. She prevailed on him to drink it, with the qualification of a glass of whiskey. It had no immediate effect, and Terence departed in some short time after. Alice felt her heart at rest, and retired to sleep with a mind more at ease than it had been for some time before. Terence awoke in the middle of the night from an uneasy and painful slumber. His head was reeling and aching, and his senses were bewildered and confused. He tossed about in a wild manner, and spoke incoherently of Alice Moore and his father. The morning came, but it brought the parents a miserable sight—their only son a murmuring idiot—his eyes gazed with the vacant unmeaning stare of a fool—and when spoken to, he answered wide and without a comprehension of the words uttered. When alone he raved incessantly, and appeared to suffer much from pain. Physicians were sent for, and remedies applied, but in vain; they declared it was no common disease, and acknowledged it was beyond their skill.

Time and medicine relieved the pain, but he was a confirmed maniac, and ranted and raved at times with all the blind fury of one in violent madness. At other seasons he was dull and mopish, and silent and moody; but at all times he was fond of rambling, and whenever he could, would break away and ramble for miles through the country, and from town to town. The parents beheld the wreck of their hopes with tearful eyes and breaking hearts; they blamed themselves and blamed Alice; they applied to Madge, but the old one told them with a sneer, "she could not assist him, nor was she willing to do it if she could." Alice! the news fell on her like a thunderbolt. Her expectations were crushed for ever, and she accused herself in all the bitterness of despair. The health of the maniac, after about four months, appeared to decline rapidly; he grew easier, but as his mind settled into gloom, his frame rapidly gave way. He no longer was watched so carefully, nor did he ramble past the little village, for he seemed unable to venture on long journeys. One night, however, he stole out unobserved, and proceeded towards the habitation of Alice Moore. There was light in the house, though it was late, and he entered. Alice was sick—the midwife in attendance, and all was hurry and bustle about the house. Terence proceeded to the little chamber where Alice was on her bed of agony, and quietly seating himself on a chair, he looked anxiously at the poor sufferer. She turned and beheld him, and she shrieked with terror and surprise. His wild eyes were fixed on her—in his haggard and emaciated countenance there was a strange expression of idiotcy and affection. He started not at her shrill scream but, smiling faintly, he said—"Alice won't you come now and get married—'tis time—dress yourself, my love—see, I have brought the ring." and

he produced a ring, which, it appears, he had purchased before the fatal dose was administered, for the special purpose of being united to Alice, and had preserved in all his madness and misery. The attendants rushed in; they were surprised to find the maniac so quietly seated by her bedside. They endeavoured to remove him by force, but he dashed them aside, and again seated himself beside the bed. "Alice," he said, "you ought to remember your promise. There'll be a fine dance to-morrow at the cross roads, mind you musn't dance with Jem Reilly. But won't you marry me, after all? My father sez he's sorry now he said anything agin us, so you know we will now be happy."

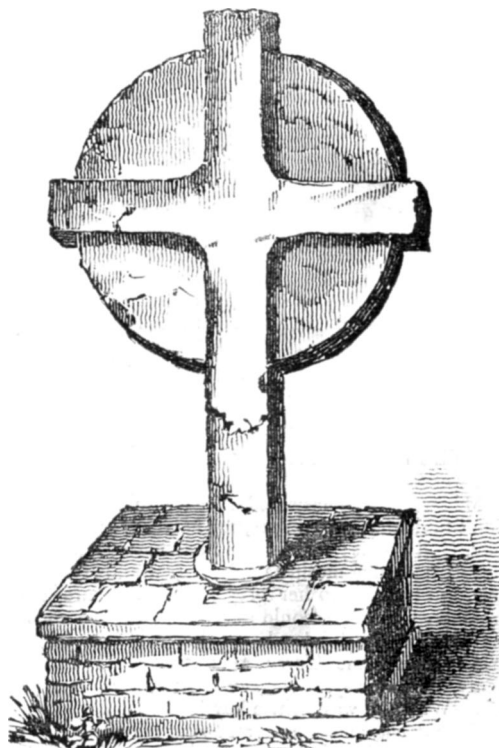
"For heaven's sake," said Alice, with agitation and feeling, "take him away, but don't hurt him—coax him out, he'll do anything for kindness, but don't speak cross to him."

They began by promises and kind words to draw him away; still he gazed at Alice with unheeding earnestness, until a sudden pain seemed to shoot through his brain. He raised his hand to his brow and uttered a short cry; he remained motionless for a time, yet it could be observed that the features of his face seemed moving as in agony. He withdrew his hand—"oh, God!" he exclaimed, with a deep-drawn and convulsive sigh, and slowly tottered from the house.

Early next morning, as some labourers were going to work, they observed a human figure lying in a dry ditch, not far from the house of Alice Moore. They approached, and beheld, cold, still, and dead, the body of Terence Magrath; at the same time the mournful wail for the dead arose on their ears from the habitation of the unfortunate Alice. She too had departed—the shock of his appearance at such a time was more than her exhausted frame and bursting heart could bear.

J. L. L.

ANCIENT CROSS OF FINGLAS.



It is generally known, that Finglas was the reputed residence of St. Patrick, who conferred upon it many endowments and privileges. He blessed a well, which is said to have singular virtues in healing diseases and there are, to this day, to be seen, on the bushes about, various bits of cloth, said to be the cast-off bandages of those who were healed, which they hung up as *votivæ tabulae*, to commemorate their cure. He also prophesied, that

* There is great faith placed in "love powder;" but it is supposed, if administered in too large a quantity, or too strong a dose, it will bring on madness, which, in a short or longer period, according to the constitution of the patient, terminates in death. I have had pointed out to me several sufferers from this cause. *Cantharides* is said to be the principal ingredient.